

identity and the signature of parties using computers has become a major concern. Unless a reliable alternative to written signatures is acknowledged, the promise of electronic commerce will not be fully realized.

State legislatures have recognized this need. At the present time 30 States have enacted or have introduced some form of digital authentication law. Unfortunately, these State statutes lack uniformity both in scope and application. Electronic communications and commerce take place on the Internet or elsewhere in cyberspace. Therefore, State boundaries have little relevance and conflicting State electronic authentication laws may ultimately inhibit the development of electronic commerce.

The bill I am introducing today is designed to address the issue of conflicting and confusing developments under current and proposed State law. The purpose of the Electronic Financial Services Efficiency Act of 1997 is threefold: First, to provide for the recognition of digital and other forms of authentication as an alternative to existing paper-based methods, second, to improve the efficiency and soundness of the Nation's capital markets and payment system, and third, to harmonize the practices, customs and uses applicable to electronic authentication on a uniform, nationwide basis.

The first goal is accomplished by explicitly recognizing that all forms of electronic commerce that comport with specific, basic statutory standards shall have parity with written signatures. As a result, they will be considered valid for all communications with Federal agencies, U.S. Courts and other instrumentalities of the U.S. Government.

In order to minimize confusion and encourage uniform national treatment, unless the laws of a State otherwise expressly provide, all forms of electronic authentication that comport with the Federal statutory standards shall have the same standing as written signatures for all legal purposes.

The second goal is met by the establishment of the National Association of Certification Authorities [NACA]. Any person or group that wishes to provide electronic authentication services in the United States must be a registered NACA member. The NACA may admit any person or group to membership, provided they are licensed and provide electronic authentication services consistent with the standards set forth in this act.

The third goal is met by the creation of an Electronic Authentication Standards Review Committee within the NACA. Overseen by the Secretary of the Treasury, the Standards Review Committee shall establish, develop, and refine criteria to be applied to new electronic authentication methods, consistent with the specific standards set forth in the Electronic Financial Services Efficiency Act of 1997.

Recognizing that digital authentication will be used in retail transactions, this legislation requires that consumers be notified of the fact that an electronic communication or transaction has been digitally authenticated. Furthermore, the act states that any rights currently afforded to consumers in underlying

transactions are not in any manner impaired or weakened. Additionally, the Standards Review Committee has the authority to address consumer protection by exercising its rule-making and enforcement powers.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that this legislation will authorize and validate the use of electronic authentication. It will also encourage innovation and stimulate competition in the design and use of reliable state-of-the-art digital technology.

#### RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF ALICE PETROSSIAN

#### HON. JAMES E. ROGAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, November 8, 1997*

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a woman who had dedicated her career to serving students throughout California and our Nation—Alice Petrossian. Now more than ever, we must encourage our teachers to be their best, push our students to work hard and set goals, and invest in strengthening our education system. Recently, this dear friend and educator was awarded the Professional of the Year award by the Armenian Professional Society for her ongoing commitment as an educator.

Alice began her career at California State University Los Angeles, earning both her bachelor's and master's degree before heading to California State University Hayward to pursue her teaching credential. He work toward excellence in education was recognized early on as she received the Most Outstanding Graduate award at both schools.

Alice then moved back to southern California where she became actively involved with the Glendale Unified School District serving recently as the director of special projects and intercultural programs. She has received much recognition for her service, and her talents have been called upon by each of the last three Governors of California.

Alice has served on the California Community College Board, the California Post Secondary Education Board, and has worked with the Commission for the Establishment of Academic Content and Standards to ensure that quality curricula are united with well-prepared teachers offering our children the tools necessary for the future.

Alice's most important work goes beyond any committee or board on which she might serve. Since her arrival in Glendale, she has reached out to students of all backgrounds. Alice has put faith in at-risk students, and those that might slip through the cracks. Her efforts to provide quality education for all students have distinguished her as a friend of education.

Alice has gone above and beyond the call of duty by establishing scholarship funds, promoting mentoring programs, and working to benefit all students. The greatest honor she can receive, and the greatest thanks we can

offer is by witnessing the change in the lives of every student she has touched. In recognition of her commitment to education, and to the students of California and our Nation, I ask my colleagues to join me today in saluting the service of Alice Petrossian.

#### TRIBUTE TO IRSHAD-UI-HAQUE

#### HON. JAMES E. ROGAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Saturday, November 8, 1997*

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a man who has exemplified the spirit and determination of what makes American great—Irshad-Ui-Haque. Irshad has built a career as a devoted family man, successful entrepreneur, and compassionate community leader. He has cleared many hurdles in life, and always come out with a compassion for his fellow man and a personal commitment to make a difference.

In 1960, Irshad came to the United States from Pakistan with very little money and speaking very little English. However, he was not deterred. He labored exhaustingly long hours in a sweatshop for a paltry \$1.00 per hour. With an eye on his future, he dedicated himself to learning English, pursuing an academic career, and working to make the most of his future.

Irshad attended classes when not working, and moved on from Pasadena City College to the University of Southern California, where he earned a degree in business. Following graduation, Irshad spent over 10 years working for the Xerox Corp. where his talent was quickly recognized.

In 1972, Irshad and his wife took a gamble. They opened Bantam Associates and eventually turned a family-owned property management company into the parent of one of the largest storage and archive management firms in the Nation. He will quickly shy away from claiming too much success for his achievements, the biggest credit he will pay to his wife and his daughters.

Irshad leads by example, and has been deeply involved in many philanthropic organizations. He has dedicated his time and resources to the Los Angeles Police Department, the Boy Scouts of America, various chambers of commerce and service organizations, and to health care agencies serving the elderly and poor. Because of his many acts of service, Irshad was awarded the Glendale Man of Achievement Award last week by the Glendale News Press.

Irshad Haque has taken his thread of knowledge, determination, and compassion and woven it into a shining example of what makes our country whole. In recognition of his selection for the Man of Achievement honor, and in gratitude for his service to his community, I ask my colleagues here today to join me in thanking and congratulating a great American, Irshad-Ui-Haque.